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SNEWS

Volume II

April 3, 1950

Number 2

STAFF MEETING & PARTY FOR MEMBERS HIGHLIGHT SN DOINGS THIS WEEK!!!

PARTY ON FRIDAY FOLLOWS FINAL DECISION BY STAFF ON FM !!!

### Station Manager's Corner

I feel that the staff members have a right to know where I stand in regard to the FM situation. I have made a definite decision NOT to go around talking to the individual members of the staff on my own views. I will confine my own opinions to this issue of the SNews, which is intended for your information, and upon which and the discussion at the meeting, YOU, the station personnel, will have to make the decision which so vitally affects the future of WSRN.

Because this is the only concrete compilation of information and views on FM, it is essential that you read this entire issue! I cannot emphasize this too strongly. It may look long, but please, PLEASE read it all--and if you have any questions, bring them to the meeting.

It is also essential that you COME to the meeting. Proxy voting will be allowed under special conditions explained elsewhere. ALL, repeat, ALL members should plan to attend this meeting.

This issue of the SNews is divided into several parts. One is the regular news of the station. One is the background for FM, another is the suggested plan of operating the FM station, if approved, and part four contains various views on the proposed FM affiliate.

Your station manager sent letters to over one dozen wheels asking them to send me their views for inclusion in this issue. Only 3 people replied--this is unfortunate, but even sadder is the

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The first station party of the spring semester will be held Friday night, April 7th, immediately after a meeting of the entire SN staff to take the FINAL decision on whether to apply to the college administration for permission to establish an educational FM station as an affiliate to the present AM --"carrier-current" WSRN.

### FM Meeting

At 7 pm this Friday evening in the LTC room next to SN, a meeting of the full station staff has been called. This meeting will vote on whether to continue the FM application, now being processed, and apply to the administration for permission to set up this station, or whether to junk the entire matter and remain as we now are.

Almost the entire rest of this issue of the SNews is devoted to discussing this matter. Read this SNews FULLY. And, since this is the most important step affecting the future of SN taken in the last 5 years, BE SURE TO COME TO THE MEETING FRIDAY!!!

### Party Planned

Alan Kamman and Jo Piper were named co-chairmen to plan the SN brawl. The party will be held "off-campus"---place unknown at the present, this Friday evening, after the meeting, and is both "stag" & "drag." The cost to each member is 50¢, per person, and date, which should be paid to Al or Jo by Tuesday, April 4th, if possible. As for the refreshments, they will be "off-campus" style, which is all the two chairmen will say. One important

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# Station Manager's Corner (con't)

fact that none of the opponents of the plan submitted their views. I will try therefore to sum up as best I can, the different views on the situation. I hope I can present these fairly.

However, I will also try to list for you some of the people with opposing view-points, and I would ask the station members to give special attention to their talks at the meeting.

Generally favoring the plan are myself, Wolf Epstein, Bill Young, Jay Finkel, Ted Conant, Alan Kamman, Dick Ridgway, Joe Rutledge, Bob Gamnit and others.

I call your attention more especially to the opponents that I know of---Al Ward, Dave Shearer, Mike Eisler, and others.

Since financing this deal will be important, I also ask your attention to the opinion here of the Keeper of the Golden Horde, Jack Hopkirk, and his assistant, Elliott Brebner.

Also, representing the views of the average station member are Pete Cislak, Norm Sher, and others.

I hope you will give everyone the attention and courtesy their views are due. The meeting need not be prolonged.

My own views, as I have said, are generally favorable, and I intend to vote for FM. That doesn't mean that I don't see some things wrong with FM, it does mean that I have weighed all the factors myself, and have concluded that the best thing for WSRN to do is to maintain an FM affiliate.

There is only one fallacy of argument, at least as it appears to me, that I wish to discuss here.

Some people object to FM because it will not serve the student body, and thus should not be established for this reason. I disagree!

What if SN had gone into FM

in 1939-40 when the station was set-up? The same problem would have presented itself. If we are kicked off the air by the FCC any time at all, and wish to have some sort of station, this problem will always confront us.

The question is not, whether we will serve the student audience at first with FM or not (and we obviously won't) but HOW LONG is it until we CAN serve the students with our FM station!

It therefore devolves upon WSRN to carry out a program of educating students so that they will want FM sets and also of supplying them with sets. Several methods have been suggested for doing this. One is to act as a wholesale agency for manufactures, selling sets to students at wholesale, and servicing them free. At the discounts we can get, we can make it very attractive for students to get FM sets.

WSRN can also contact each incoming freshman class over the summer and explain the situation to them, interesting them into bringing FM sets to school or getting them for the students.

The trend, with FM sound being included with all TV sets, is definitely toward FM stations in this country. WFLN & SN's programming of classical music (and the great demand here for this music) will, I think, hasten the increase of FM sets on campus.

Coupled with this is the fact that more and more manufacturers are making low-priced FM sets.

It will be several years before there will be enough FM sets on campus to give us a good audience. During this time we hope, SN will be on the air, as we hope it will always be on the air. If we ever have to go into FM, we had better get started early, and not prolong this plan of getting the student body to get FM sets any longer. During these first years, we could operate WSRN-FM primarily as a public relations station for the



college, thus proving to them as well as the students, the worth of FM!

KRK

#### Party Planned (con't)

matter, please don't try to set an exact time with your date to pick herx (him) up after the meeting. Sometime between 8 & p should be all right, but why not tell him (her) you'll pick her(him) up as soon as the meeting is over.

#### SN PINS

A sheet of paper has been posted on the office bulletin board for members who would like to get SN pins. These pins are silver WSRN initials on a black background with clasp and pin. They cost \$1.35 but if 25 or more order them we get a 10% discount. Please sign up at once so we can begin ordering. Some of the old members have pins which you can see before you sign up.

#### IBS Bulletin

The first, revived issue of the IBS Bulletin (and we are a member of the Intercollegiate Broadcasting System), is on display in the office. Copies are available for most members. Please help us clean up the office by taking a copy. It isn't a bad issue at all.

#### Formats & Bibles

In both of the Bibles, engr's as well as anner's, new "formats" for most of our shows have been placed.

"Formats" are written guides to the announcement and theme, etc for a show. It states the copy the anner is to read, and how the engr is to handle the theme. Engrs can follow the format as the anner reads it. The quality of all our shows can be improved if ALL the formats are followed.

Formats will be re-written from time to time, so please do not omit using one merely because you

think it is a pretty poor example of copy-writing. Instead, use it and make some suggestions to the studio or station manager for its improvement.

#### SN & Phoenix

Each week, WSRN's schedule will appear in the Finx. Please get the habit of looking this over and calling the attention of your cell-mates and friends to it. Even more important to all station members is the fact that important notices for SN staff members are often included in the stories about SN. Often, it is much easier to place this notice in the Finx, rather than post it at SN, or issue a SNews. So please make a habit of reading the Finx each week and look for the SN column. (At the same time, whenever you come up to SN for your work in the evening, be sure to look on ALL the bulletin boards, and ask the studio manager "what's new?"

#### Proxy Voting

Proxy voting at the FM meeting this Friday will be allowed ONLY under the following conditions: Voting proxies must be written out, signed with the name of the person voting, and must contain the position of the voter, "For" or "against". FM will be sufficient, but since there are various shades of opinion you may also state your qualifications.

The station manager's discourages this practice, but you may also state your wish to give your vote to another member who will be present. In this case, his (her) name--and signature accepting the vote--should be given on the proxy.

ALL PROXIES MUST BE GIVEN TO THE STATION MANAGER IN PERSON! NONE WILL BE ACCEPTED BY MAIL!!!

A pass for two people to the College Theater is available to SNers. See the Station Manager.

## Background on College Radio

College radio---using the "carrier-current" principle originated in the mid 1930s. The principle of "carrier-current" is that instead of radiating your signal from an antenna tower, you feed it directly into the college power system. Thus, every piece of electrical and power apparatus using that power automatically becomes an antenna and radiates your signal. All the college power lines, the radio in your room, etc. both receive and radiate your signal.

College radio stations, strictly speaking do not come fully under FCC regulations. This federal agency can, for cause, throw any station off the air and has tolerated college stations for the past dozen years. Several commercial ventures, such as large apartment houses and some utilities companies also use this system. Now, the FCC has placed the principle on their docket for investigation and discussion. The present rules which do apply state a specific "field strength" which a station's signal, using carrier current, must comply with. Briefly, this is a signal whose strength is confined within 200' on either side of the college power system, and is equal to "15 micro-volts per meter." Anything in excess of this over 200' is illegal.

The Harvard station was thrown off the air because its excessive signal interfered with a commercial station. Its signal was 450 micro-volts per meter. SN's signal is, at some points, several hundred times greater than this!

The FCC has several choices regarding carrier current stations. It can allow the situation to remain as it is (and this is just about unthinkable.) It can relax the regulations (ditto.) Or it can tighten them. Opinions differ, but the third choice seems the most likely. The real question is, how tight will the regulations get? Will they get so tight as to force most stations now operating under carrier current to discontinue operations on what? No one really knows.

However, there are some stations which actually cannot meet the regulation 15 microvolts per meter now. WSRN seems to be one of these. One of the troubles is that college wiring systems were never designed for radiating broadcast signals, nor does the quality of the wiring compare with what it should be for radiating radio programs. Add to this the fact that a college builds different dorms, classrooms, etc. over many years---and may use a different type of wiring system with different radiation characteristics---and you see the headache for college stations. A station may put a signal into one building which will radiate in under the regulations, but if it puts the same signal into another building, that building's wiring system may radiate that signal far in excess of the legal limits! The SN technical staff differs slightly on the point of whether WSRN could send out its signal so that it was radiated from all buildings under the limits prescribed, but the general answer seems to be that we can NOT. It may be possible, but only with somewhat extensive and expensive changes. (See letter later on.)

The FCC has, in the last dozen years, pioneered itself a new type of broadcasting, which it considers as its "baby." This is "educational FM"---the difference between this and regular FM being: (1) no commercials are allowed, (2) the FCC allows the stations to be licensed very easily, allowing them to skip paying the usually very high technical and legal fees, (3) makes channels available to them, under low-power transmitters which can be run by operators who do not have to meet all



the requirements that operators of commercial stations must meet. This type of station provides the Federal Communications Commission with a group of "laboratory" stations which it can stack up against regular commercial stations in various ways for profitable (?) comparisons.

There are now many rumors afoot. Some that the FCC will force all college stations now operating on carrier current into FM. Personally, I doubt this, but it is possible. The FCC has made no secret of the fact that it is strongly recommending all new college stations under construction to use educational FM rather than carrier current. If the FCC forces college stations into FM, how long will it give them to make the change? This is an important question, and again no one knows the answer. However, only a limited number of educational channels for FM are available in any one area--like TV. Some areas will have no trouble and all stations will get channels, in others, some stations will be left out and will have to go off the air. This is strictly a first, come, first served arrangement.

#### FM as Proposed for WSRN

1. Let's get this straight at once---at this moment, there are NO plans for putting WSRN off the air if we get an FM station. The FM station will be an affiliate pure and simple. SN will NOT go off the air unless forced to do so by the FCC. WSRN-AM will be, and must remain the chief emphasis of the Swarthmore Radio Network.

2. The FM station, if adopted, would take only certain of the SN regular programs--at least at first. Classical music from Cutting and the sports and special events broadcasts would be the main programs---with Symphony Hall, Masterworks, etc being carried by both stations. (Commercials could be carried on SN, and cut off the FM, on a cue.)

3. FCC rules are very lenient about the times an FM station has to be in operation. This station could be operated at our convenience. The requirements for operators of FM transmitters are being relaxed, so that it would not be any trouble to get licensed student transmitter operators. These people would have to keep simple "logs" for the FCC.

4. As planned now, the FM transmitter would be placed in the math lab, and the 20' antenna tower on top of Parrish. This would give us "perfect" coverage within 3 miles, "adequate coverage" within 5-6 miles, and "maximum coverage" within 12 miles. This means that all of Chester, Media, Lansdowne, and parts of Philly could hear us. This point is important in our programming, and it also means that we could very effectively operate as a public relations instrument of the college.

5. Cost--a GE transmitter will cost is approximately \$2,000, with tower. Total costs are estimated at just under \$2,100. The cost of operating the transmitter each year would be small, and would be under \$50.00

6. How to get FM STEP 1---file an application with the FCC. This is good for one year and may be withdrawn at any time, without prejudice to any application made at a future date. By vote of the last staff meeting this application is being filled out now.

STEP 2---secure the approval of the FM station from the WSRN staff. The meeting Friday is for this purpose. If this is approved, we go on to step 3, if not, the matter ends there.

STEP 3---apply to the administration for permission to set up an FM station. If granted, proceed to step 4; if not the matter is ended.

STEP 4---Work out an adequate plan for financing the FM affiliate. Various ways have been suggested, but need not be gone into here. This can be worked out in co-operation with the college.

#### COMMENTS & VIEWS

Technical opinion (Technical Director Bill Young et al.)---It is possible probably to make our AM broadcasting facilities fall within the present regulations of the FCC, but I am not sure----and even if it is possible, it would be a tremendous job to make us legal. It would mean changing our entire signal distribution system so that each dormitory is fed only as much power as it needs. Even then, we may not be able to get sufficient signal strength without excessive radiation away from the building. Another factor to worry about is the type and size of the power load presented by each building changes as more or less power is consumed, so that under daylight conditions when little power is used and most lights are off, it may be possible to find an adjustment which satisfies a minimum building signal strength and does not violate the 15 microvolts per meter---BUT when nighttime rolls around our radiation pattern will radically change, maybe toward more, maybe toward less radiation. Summarizing then, we may be able to legalize our AM operation, but the time required would be more than all of our technical department put together could afford. We definitely could reduce our radiation a good deal by simpler methods, but that is all I can say.

Alan Kamman---It would be "cutting out nose off to spite our face" not to apply for FM now. According to the tech dept. if we don't apply for an FM channel now, we might not be able to get on in 3 or 4 years. And what if the FCC forces us into FM then....I think that the fact FM would be a public service to people in the Philly area should be considered. Certainly, our first "oath of allegiance" is to the college, but we shouldn't allow this to throw out this other facet of our operations. It is nice to know that some of our programs have listeners!

Bob Gumnit---Briefly, I am in favor of an FM affiliate. Reasons: AM channels are practically impossible to get, the band is just about as full as it can get. To make a long story short, there is no room on the AM band for us, even if the FCC were to relax its regulations. That means the possibility of the FCC letting us have power over the range we now have is almost nil...Those college in the cities are already in trouble. Harvard was put off the air, Lehigh was forced to cut down on its authorized signal, and complaints have been received that the Temple station can be heard in NW Philly, and is interfering with WIP. Swarthmore is a little better off than some of these since we are relatively remote, BUT the FCC can only draw up one set of regulations, and these will be made to keep the CITY stations under control. Which means WE will have MORE trouble than they since our campus is so spread out. Thus the possibility that the FCC would let things ride is also slim, since there are reports of interference already. Besides, this would be only a half way measure. Sooner or later the problem would rise again, and FM channels would be even harder to get than they are now.

According to the best technical information I could get it would be almost an impossible job to get wit in the present FCC regulations,



let alone stiffer ones they might draft, due to the interference caused by supposedly legal stations. Also, even if possible, the cost of doing so would be prohibitive. Were we to go on FM now the cost would be around \$2000---if we were forced off the air, to get back on would probably cost much more. (FM provides a nucleus around which to regroup SN if we are forced off AM.) Also the govt. seems to be pushing educational FM like made. We are likely to be told to get on FM-period. They seem to think it is a panacea of some sort. We had better prepare for the future.

Objections---(1) If we spend all our money on FM, we will kill our chances of ever improving the station so as to fit under the FCC. We can fit under these so let's do it!

(2) If we get an FM station the FCC will suggest we get rid of our AM station and we will not be able to serve the college. Also if we get an FM station, the budget committee will not want to give us money for SN, because they will say we have one station, a bigger one, so why support SN.

(3) This station will not primarily serve the students, which is the main purpose for SN.

(4) Getting FM will mean we will have to improve all our programs, and will mean the end of the informal ways we like about SN.

(5) Since we will be reaching so many more people with FM, the college will be justified in imposing sort of "control" on us so that nothing is aired which damages the college's reputation. This is censorship! It means an end to SN as well.

(6) To pay for FM, we'll have to put SN "in hock" for a few years, cutting down on our year's budget so much as to cripple us.

#### Prejudiced Views of Station Manager in Answer:

(1) This is possible, but I don't think probable. Don't forget though that we won't get an extra money, except for FM alone. Our yearly budget will probably not be touched for FM. I'm not a technician, but what I hear, even though our tech dept is prejudiced in favor of FM, would lead me to believe that under the present regulations we can NOT stay within the FCC limits and still be heard on campus where we should be heard.

(2) Nonsense, the FCC has not asked other college which have the two set-ups to go on one exclusively. SN MUST remain our main emphasis. If we didn't have SN's equipment, with which we will feed programs into our FM transmitter, we would have to get new equipment just for FM. I'm sure the Budget Committee wouldn't like this.

(3) I have already covered this. I regret as much as anyone that we can't serve the student audience right away--but TV or FM doesn't serve all the people right away either. We must build for the future. (cliche)

(4) Quite possibly. I'm prejudiced, but I think we ought to improve some of our programs. As for destroying the SN atmosphere, that will depend entirely on the personnel---not the technical facilities or the rules. If the people want to keep SN as it is, they will.

(5) The college has a right to insist that we do nothing on FM to injure its reputation. But they have this right as far as SN is now concerned. However, since SN doesn't --at least in theory--get off the campus, they have never exercised any censorship. They might for FM; it is conceivable. I, personally, am opposed to any administration or faculty advisor, other than informally, with any concrete powers. If the college felt the need to "censor" us, it would probably be an outstanding incident, like the Finx suspension. No one wants this sort of interference, but if we operate SN as we should, and this doesn't mean the end of our "good times" we shouldn't have to fear "censorship." FRIDAY--7 PM!!!

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